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FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3857

INFO RUCNMEM/EU MEM COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA PRIORITY 6221

RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PRIORITY 5327

RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ PRIORITY 1832

RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA PRIORITY 0038

RUEHQD/AMEMBASSY QUITO PRIORITY 1906

RUEHME/AMEMBASSY MEXICO PRIORITY 3656

RUEHOT/AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PRIORITY 0639

RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES PRIORITY 1101

RUEHSG/AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO PRIORITY 3389

RUEHMU/AMEMBASSY MANAGUA PRIORITY 1099

RUEHDG/AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO PRIORITY 0081

RUEHAO/AMCONSUL CURACAO PRIORITY 0700

RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 0046

RUEHMI/USOFFICE FRC FT LAUDERDALE PRIORITY 2944

RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

RUMIAAA/HQ USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL PRIORITY

RUEHUB/USINT HAVANA PRIORITY 0599

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HQSOUTHCOM ALSO FOR POLAD
FOR FRC LAMBERT

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/28/2026

TAGS: SNAR PREL PINR VZ

SUBJECT: BRV COUNTERDRUG AMBIVALENCE

Classified By: AMBASSADOR WILLIAM F. BROWNFIELD FOR 1.5 (D)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: The BRV's CN relationship with us continues to be ambivalent. On one hand, the Antidrogas command of the National Guard (GN) is increasingly willing to work with us within our Port Security Project, while BRV Drug Czar Luis Correa appears to be penalizing NGO Alianza for having too close of a relationship with us. Correa insists that there is no persecution and that CN cooperation will rapidly take off once the Addendum to the 1978 CN MOU is signed. END SUMMARY

¶2. (U) Our only active project with the BRV is the Port Security Project. This week small steps forward were achieved with the assistance of the National Guard (GN) Antidrogas command. First, Antidrogas agreed to be formally named the end-user of a NAS funded container inspection machine, a requirement for importing the gamma source. The machine is a loaner until we get our own and will be used in conjunction with our Puerto Cabello Container Inspection Facility (CIF). Though agreeing to be the formal end-user may not seem like much, our BRV contacts have been wary of putting their names to any document which links them with the USG.

¶3. (U) Also, after months of delay, Antidrogas finally authorized our CBP inspectors stationed in Puerto Cabello to conduct two days of training in Tachira, March 22-23. The rudimentary course included analysis of travel and cargo documents, observational techniques, interviewing techniques, and inspection techniques. The course was well attended and the students enthusiastic. Demand for the class was such that not all could be accommodated, and we plan to return the week of April 9.

¶4. (C) On March 14 the Ambassador hosted a fundraiser for Alianza para una Venezuela sin Drogas, a sister organization of Partnership for a Drug Free America. Three hundred well-heeled members of the business and media were invited,

more than 200 confirmed, but only about 75 showed up. Previous iterations of this same event have always been very well attended. Several of the no-shows told Alianza they were apprehensive that attending an event at the U.S. Ambassador's residence could open them up to political persecution. BRV Drug Czar Luis Correa was invited to the fundraiser but refused to attend, giving us the excuse that a member of Alianza's board of directors, Marcel Granier, was a coup-plotter. (Note: Granier is prominent opposition figure who has fearlessly attacked the Chavez government. He owns and directs the private television station RCTV.)

¶15. (C) Apparently, snubbing the event was not sufficient for Correa. On March 20 he called television stations Globovision and Venevision to advise them that Alianza had been decertified as a BRV-approved demand reduction NGO and that any time donated to Alianza would be taxed. This information was initially passed to us by Alianza but was later confirmed by Granier, the media NGO Bloque de Prensa, and our contacts in Globovision and Venevision. Both immediately pulled the Alianza commercials. In a March 23 meeting, Globovision added that Correa had specifically referred to the March 14 fundraiser when explaining the reasons for decertifying Alianza.

¶16. (C) After an in-house meeting, we determined to confront Correa. On March 24, NAS and DEA met with Correa and bluntly accused him of persecuting Alianza solely for having held their fundraiser at the Ambassador's residence. Correa took umbrage, but not too much, insisting that the fundraiser and the decision to take away their tax-free status were not related. He went on to explain that the transformation of

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the Commission Against Drug Abuse (CONACUID) into the National Anti-drug Office (ONA) required that each of the 305 CN-related NGO's previously approved by CONACUID be reevaluated and approved by ONA. Alianza, he insisted, had yet to do so. He promised to work with Alianza to expedite their petition for tax-free status.

¶17. (C) We took advantage of the meeting to give Correa an advance copy of the Addendum to the 1978 CN MOU. A formal copy was transmitted by dip note to the MFA. Correa was visibly pleased to get it and was optimistic that it would be signed soon, insisting that our complaints about lack of cooperation were about to end.

¶18. (C) COMMENT: Correa is anxious to move this Addendum forward as its signing will represent a rare achievement for him. Drug seizures are well behind last year's and Correa's controlling and manipulative behavior continues to alienate his colleagues within the BRV police, military and intelligence apparatus. Correa is a professional intelligence officer. Before taking over CONACUID/ONA, Correa headed the technical unit within the Intelligence Services Directorate (DISIP) that targeted the U.S. Mission. Notches on his belt include turning a USG informant and penetrating an unclassified email system. While undoubtedly clever, his DISIP-inspired management style has not been successful. He treats his contacts like informants, compartmentalizes information, and believes surreptitiously exchanging information epitomizes bilateral cooperation. He is sadly unable to fill the coordinating and policy generation role that his position demands.

DEA COMMENT

¶19. (S) Luis Correa, while a member of the civilian intelligence agency DISIP, was responsible for monitoring U.S. Embassy communications with teltap and cellular intercept equipment. He also managed a computer hacker who, by targeting opposition figures, managed to obtain an Embassy officer's unclassified emails. Additionally, since mid-2004,

Correa has led a team of intelligence officers to conduct surveillance of DEA agents and the DEA vetted unit. During this time, Correa was able to infiltrate the DEA vetted unit headquarters and sabotage equipment purchased by NAS.

¶10. (S) In March 2006, Correa directed a professional contact of the DEA to provide him information regarding current DEA investigations in an effort to expose DEA for conducting unilateral operations within Venezuela. Correa stated that he wanted to find the next John Correa, the U.S. Naval Attache expelled for espionage. When the contact refused, Correa asked the contact's supervisor to pressure the contact to cooperate.

BROWNFIELD